10.

A DISCOURSE OF THE RELIGION OF ENGLAND.

ASSERTING,

That REFORMED CHRISTIANITY setled in its Due Latitude, is the Stability and Advancement of this KINGDOM.

LONDON, Printed in the Year M. DC. LX. VII.

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THE PREFACE.

REligion being deeply imprinted in Humane Nature, and having a great Power over it, and being more notably displayed in the present Age, is become the Grand Interest of *States*, and almost of all men; though not after the same manner, nor upon the same Grounds and Motives. For this cause, whether it comes in Truth, or in Shew only, it is found to rule and turn about the great Affairs of the World. And though many things of different nature, may have great influence on the State of this Kingdom, yet *Religion* and *Matters of Conscience* evi-

evidently appear to have the greateſt. The diſtinguiſhing of Perſons for the favour or diſfavour of the Times; yea, the very Names of Diſcrimination paſs upon the account of *Religious Differences*. The Active part of all ſorts and ranks of men, is hereby chiefly ſwayed in their Motions; and their Affections move more importunately in this One, then in all their other Concernments. Wherefore if a Settlement may be found out, which may accommodate all thoſe Parties or Perſwaſions, in which the Peace of the Nation is bound up; it will prove the undoubted Intereſt of this State. And if ſuch a Settlement be likewiſe found to be the true and ſound ſtate of Religion, it muſt needs be acceptable to the faithful Servants of Chriſt, and the true Lovers of their Country.

Now the Adventure of this Diſcourſe

is to Aſſert, *That Reformed Chriſtianity rightly ſtated, and ſetled in its due Latitude, is the Stability and Advancement of the Kingdom of* England. Nothing is here ſuggeſted for Politick Ends, to corrupt the Purity, or enervate the Power of Religion, or to leſſen Charity; but the Fatherly Compaſſion of Rulers, and the mutual Brotherly Condeſcention of all Chriſtians, required by the Law of Chriſt, and ſome Connivence in caſe of inſuperable Neceſſities, and that for the Truth's ſake, is here propounded. *Epiſcopacy* is not undermined, nor any other Form of Government here inſinuated; only a Relaxation of the Preſcribed Uniformity, and ſome Indulgence to Diſſenters of Sound Faith, and Good Life, is ſubmiſſively offered to the Conſideration of our Superiors. All Pragmatical Arrogance, preſuming to give Rules to Gover-

vernours, and to teach them what to do, is carefully avoided; only the Possibility, Expediency, and Necessity of Moderation, is represented. And it is humbly desired, That this Honest Intention in pursuance of Peace, may find a favourable Reception.

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A DISCOURSE OF THE RELIGION of *ENGLAND.*

SECT. I.

The Religion of this Realm, and three different Parties of moſt important conſideration; The Proteſtants *of the Church of* England, *the* Proteſtant Nonconformiſts, *and the* Papiſts.

THE Religion of *England* conſidered, not only as eſtabliſhed by Law, but as rooted in the Nation, and generally embraced, is that which is called *Proteſtant*, and is no other then Chriſtianity recovered out of the Antichriſtian Apoſtacy, and reformed from the Corruptions of later Ages, after the Primitive Purity; receiving the holy Scriptures as the perfect Rule of Chriſtian Faith and Life.

Howbeit, in this Realm there be three different Parties of moſt important conſideration: The firſt conſiſts of thoſe Proteſtants that zealouſly adhere to the Engliſh Eccleſiaſtical Polity, and call themſelves the *Church of England.* The

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ſecond ſort is of thoſe Proteſtants that receive the Doctrine of Faith contained in the Articles of Religion, but are diſſatisfied in the form of Eccleſiaſtical Polity. Theſe by their Adverſaries have been uſually called *Puritans*. The third is of thoſe that utterly reject the Reformation, and remain united to the Pope as their Spiritual Head, and call themſelves *Roman-Catholicks*.

Hereupon an impartial ſerious Obſerver, reſpecting the Common Good, may be induced to make inquiry, How agreeable or diſ-harmonious each of theſe Three are to the Publick Weal; as alſo, What proportion they bear to each other; and whether thoſe under the Legal Eſtabliſhment, or the Diſſenters, preponderate in the Ballance of the Nation; or whether the Eſtabliſhed preponderate in that degree which is requiſite in true reaſon of Government.

SECT. II.

The Behaviour and Pretenſions of the POPISH *Party in theſe Times.*

THE *Roman-Catholicks* in *England*, conſidered not barely in their Number, but in their Rank and Quality, being Rich and Powerful, and Strong in Alliances, are very momentous, and ſeem to be capable of great Deſigns, eſpecially in conjunction with Foreign Intereſts.

In theſe times they have taken much Liberty and Boldneſs, with an undiſturbed Security, and lately have been obſerved to be more then ordinarily active, jocund and confident of the effect of their Mutual Correſpondencies; and manifold paſſages of dangerous appearance have been every where ſpoken of; in ſo much that the Nation hath taken an Alarm, and the PARLIAMENT judged the Matter worthy of their Search, and appointed a Committee to receive Informations.

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This Party hath high pretenſions of Merit towards the King, and all that are called *Royaliſts*; and they ſeek apparently more then Indulgence and Safety, even High Power and Truſt, as if they were the true and ſure Confidents of this State. Such Claims as theſe, challenge a ſerious Debate. For a Charge of a high nature (as themſelves have taken notice) hath been of a long time proſecuted againſt Popery, viz. *That it diſpoſeth Subjects to Rebellion. That it perſecutes all other Religions within its reach. That whereſoever it finds incouragement, it is reſtleſs, till it bear down all, or hath put all in Diſorder.* Till they make a better Defence then the world hath yet ſeen, we take the juſt liberty of inſiſting upon this Charge, and examining firſt, How benign or ſafe the influence of Popery is upon any State or Kingdom whatſoever; and then how it doth comport with the State of *England*, whoſe Baſis is the Proteſtant Religion, ſetled by Law, and by length of time generally ſpred, and deeply rooted in the Nation, and ſolemnly and conſtantly avowed by Prince and People.

SECT. III.

That POPERY diſpoſeth Subjects to Rebellion.

WHat hath been the conſtant practice of the Popes, who are the Head of the *Roman* Faith, the Univerſal conſent of Hiſtory bears record. What continual thundering of Excommunications hath ſounded throughout the Chriſtian world in all Ages, ſince the beginning of the Papal Reign, againſt Kings, Emperors, and other Princes and States that preſumed to diſpute their Dictates, or croſs their Deſigns, to the looſing of Subjects from the Bonds of Allegiance, and the depoſing of Sovereigns? What unexampled Abaſements hath the Imperial Majeſty ſuffered in the Perſons of ſundry Emperors, by prodigious

digious instances of Papal Pride; which, though enough to stir up the indignation of mankind, are applauded by famous Writers, Champions of the Court of *Rome*? The Popes Temporal Dominions began and grew up in Rebellion and Usurpation, for which cause they have nourished Factions, and filled the world with Warrs and Tumults, and maintained most outragious and tedious Conflicts with many Emperors, even till they had crippled and broke the back of the Empire it self.

And these practices are justified by their Decretals and Canons, and Divines of greatest Authority, and some of their Councils, ascribing to the Pope a Power of Deposing Princes that are Heretical, or favourers of Hereticks. The Jesuits Doctrine of KING-KILLING, hath made them odious; and if some passages can be alledged out of their Writings against taking away the Lives of Princes, their declared meaning is, That a King deposed by the Pope, becomes *Tirannus titulo*, and is no more a Lawful King, and then what follows, is easily understood. Those of the Church of *Rome* that disavow these things, should mind their contradiction to the Faith they own, in leaving their Popes, Divines and Canonists in a point of such importance. But how potent the influence of the Court of *Rome*, and the Agency of the Jesuits is for the diffusing of those Principles into the most and chiefest of the *Roman-Catholicks*, is not unknown.

If the undisturbed Government of the Emperor, and of the King of *Spain* in later times, be brought forth as an instance of the Loyalty of Popish Subjects, or an argument of the soundness of Popish Principles; it must be considered, That the House of *Austria* have made their devotion to the See of *Rome*, their grand and appropriate Interest, and that See hath a main dependance on those Princes; and both it and they have the same active Votaries through-

throughout Christendom, the Jesuits and their Adherents. As for the Kingdom of *France*, the State of *Venice*, and others acknowledging the Popes Headship, they have had enough to do, and they would have more, if either themselves were weak, and less formidable to the Pope, or the Popes lightning and thunder were now as dreadful as in former Ages. Even in Popish Countreys the abuses of Papal Power, and the Intrigues and Interests of the Court of *Rome* are a little better discerned; therefore those Princes and States can make the better terms for themselves; yet if either the former degree of ignorance and stupid devotion to that See, shall return upon their people, or the like occasions of embroiling or breaking States, shall revive, they must accept the Popes conditions, and submit to the former yoke.

But if the Princes of that Profession can in this our more knowing Age, with much ado hold their Subjects in obedience, against the Acts of *Rome*; yet the question concerning *England* remains intire, Whether a Protestant Prince can with good reason confide or repose himself in the Loyalty of his Popish Subjects? and more especially, Whether the fore-mentioned Popish Claims do in any wise comport with the State of *England*, whose Basis is the Protestant Religion?

No other Religion gives the Priests such an Empire over the Conscience, as the Popish doth. The Principles of that Belief, and the Order and Frame of that Church, are directed to this end, and the people are miserably inthralled to the will of their Clergy. By Auricular Confession the Priests have a constant inlet into the hearts of men, by injoyning Penances and works of Devotion, they exercise a spiritual Dominion over them. Hereby they have dayly opportunity, and advantage enough to excite them to any notable Exploits for the Catholick Cause; unto which kind

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of ſervices they fix an Opinion of the higheſt Merit, either for diſcharge from the pains of Purgatory, or for the acqueſt of a greater Reward in Glory: Yea, diſſolute perſons may be eaſily drawn to ſuch Attempts, in hope of making compenſation for a looſe and lewd life; and when they ſuffer for Sedition or Treaſon, they are held to acquire the glory of Martyrs and Confeſſors. Add hereunto their Belluine hatred of Hereticks, and vile eſteem of their perſons: And in all this, their Church's ſuppoſed Infallibility warrants this blind obedience, and brutiſh confidence. And to make void all the ſecurity that can be given between Prince and people, the Pope under pretence of Equity and Neceſſity, undertakes to diſpence with Oaths, and with all Laws both Civil and Divine. Beſides all this, there is the Jeſuits peculiar Diſcipline, moſt exquiſite for blind obedience and reſolution, and conſequently, for any great and ſtrange Attempts.

Things paſt may afford prognoſticks of thing to come. May *Englands* conſtant Experience be taken for Evidence in the caſe*. The Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, after the Proteſtant Reformation had gotten the ſtated poſſeſſion of this Kingdom, was infeſted with a continued ſucceſſion and ſeries of Treaſons, for the re-introducing of Popery, carried on by the Engliſh Papiſts with an indefatigable and implacable Spirit, proceeding from Cauſes peculiar to that Religion.

* In the Reign of Edward the ſixth, a formidable Rebellion was raiſed for recovery of the Maſs.

During the firſt ten years, they conformed to the Church of *England*; but afterwards, to teſtifie their union with the Pope, they became a divided party in this State. For then the Queen being found unmoveable, the Pope publiſhed his Declaratory Sentence againſt Her, by which all Her Subjects were abſolved from the Oath of Allegiance, and

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an *Anathema* denounced againſt thoſe that thenceforth obey Her. The Popiſh Rebellion in the North breaks out. Many horrid attempts of Violence upon Her Majeſties Perſon, were plotted one after another for many years together, as that of Dr. *Story*, of *Parry*, of *Arden* and *Somerville*, of *Throgmorton*, of *Babington* and his Complices, beſides the concurrent Commotion in *Ireland**. In theſe ſeveral Treaſons, many of the Seminary Prieſts were forward and active. The great and ſetled Deſign, was the advancing of the Queen of *Scots*, to the Crown of *England*; wherein were ingaged the Pope, and *Spaniard*, and *French* King, and Duke of *Guiſe*, in conjunction with the *Engliſh Papiſts*, making uſe of her Title to ſet on foot thoſe many deſperate Enterpriſes againſt the Queen.

* Dr. *Parry* confeſſed, that having promiſed at *Rome* to kill the Queen, he was troubled in Conſcience about it, till he had read Dr. *Allen*'s Book, which taught, That Princes excommunicate for Hereſie, were to be deprived of Kingdom and Life; which Book, he ſaid, did vehemently excite him to proſecute his Enterpriſe.

After the death of the Queen of *Scots*, they raiſed a new Title to the Crown in the Houſe of *Spain*. The memory of Eighty Eight, will be an everlaſting Monument of Papiſtical Cruelty and Treaſon. Cardinal *Allen* the firſt founder or procurer of the Foreign Seminaries, a perſon admired as well by the Secular Prieſts, as Jeſuits, penned a Treatiſe with all the Rhetorick he had, to excite the *Engliſh* Catholicks to joyn with the *Spaniards*. Among the Forces in the *Low-Countries* prepared for this Invaſion, were ſeven hundred *Engliſh* Fugitives. After the *Spaniſh* Armado was diſſipated, the Jeſuits had not done. They would have ſtirred up the Earl of *Derby* to aſſume the Title of the Kingdom; they plotted the poyſoning of the Queen by *Lopez* her Phyſician; they excited Villains to diſpatch her by bloody hands, and they never left ſoliciting the King of *Spain*, till he twice attempted another Invaſion. In thoſe times

times *Parſons* his Book of Titles was famous, wherein he ſet up divers Competitors for the Crown, preferring the Infanta before all others, and ſlighting King *James* his Title, as having but few Favourers, and little accounted by Catholicks.

The *Roman* party could be provoked to theſe miſchiefs by no other impulſe then the impetuous zeal of their Superſtition. Some of their own did then publiſh to the world their important Conſiderations, to move all true Catholicks to acknowledg, That the proceedings of Her Majeſty and the State, with them, ſince the beginning of Her Reign, had been mild and merciful. In the ſeveral times of thoſe miſchievous deſignments, though ſome prieſts were executed, yet thoſe that were found moderate in their Examinations, obtained Mercy, and a great number of them that by Law were obnoxious to death, were ſpared from that extremity, and only baniſhed. It is true, that certain Secular prieſts did impute all thoſe Treaſons to the Jeſuits and their Adherents, and fully charged them with all the aforeſaid matters of Fact, in terms of higheſt aggravation, acquitting all other Catholicks. But it muſt be noted, that the Jeſuits were in greateſt reputation, and had the predominant influence upon the *Engliſh Papiſts* in general, and (as appears by the Seculars loud Complaints) had ſuch a power of diſpoſing the Alms collected for their priſoners, and other ſufferers, that ſuch as complied not with their purpoſes, were debarr'd of relief, and pined for want. And by their counſels, the Foreign Seminaries, thoſe Nurſeries of Diſloyalty were wholly ſwayed. And 'tis obſervable, That the agrieved Seculars never publiſhed their pretended abhorrency of theſe Treaſons, till they were over-paſt, and themſelves, being driven to deſpair by the Jeſuits potency, were forced to take ſhelter under a great Prelate of the Church of *England*.

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The ſame Spirit of Diſloyalty was as active and vigorous in that Kings time, who at his firſt entrance, found himſelf excluded from Title to the Crown, by two Papal Breves, the ground-work of that Infernal Plot of matchleſs Villany and Cruelty, the *GUNPOWDER-TREASON.* After the defeat of which horrid Conſpiracy, the Projects of *Rome* proceeded not in ſuch down-right Rebellions, which always miſcarried; but in ways more ſecretly undermining Religion, and as truly deſtructive to the Intereſt of King and Kingdom.

SECT. IV.

That it Perſecutes all other Religions within its reach.

THE ſecond Branch of the Charge againſt *Popery*, is, *That it perſecutes all other Religions within its reach.* In the Church of *Rome*, for many by-paſt Ages, the Meekneſs of Chriſt, and the Dove-like nature of his Spouſe hath not appeared, but the Cruelty of that great Whore that was drunken with the Blood of the Saints, and of the Martyrs of Jeſus. All that caſt off her yoke, and diſown her pretended Infallibility, are with her no better then Hereticks, though they intirely own all the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith received by the ancient Church. And Hereticks are eſteemed more vile then dogs; and it is held meritorious to abuſe and torment them. Her Laws have made their puniſhment to be the ſharpeſt kind of death, Burning alive inexorably inflicte'. By this *Romiſh* Wrath and Fury were Three hundred Martyrs ſacrificed in Queen *Maries* time, for not believing the Sacramental Bread to be turned into the Subſtance of Chriſts Body, againſt the moſt clear and diſtinct perception and reaſon of all Mankind.

But can humane Nature hear, without horror, the report of that direful Conſiſtory, called the *Holy Inquiſition*, eſta-

bliſhed in thoſe Countries where *Popery* is in full ſway. Doubtleſs that Church whoſe Religious Orders in a ſolemn and Sacred Judicatory, ſhall commit ſuch horrid Outrages as are indeed acted by thoſe Infernal Judges, upon pretence of Juſtice and Piety, muſt needs be a School of Univerſal Cruelty for all her Adherents.

The *Popiſh* hath outgone the *Pagan Cruelty*. What Treachery and Villany hath been acted! What barbarous Indignities have been offered in ways as immodeſt and ſhameleſs, as outragious and mercileſs, upon pretence of zeal againſt Hereticks! What varieties of ſtrangely-deviſed Torments have been inflicted upon the Servants of Chriſt, without ſparing Age, Sex, or Condition! Nor hath ſuch work been done onely in our Age or Country, but in all Ages ſucceſſively, and Countries univerſally, that were imbued with *Romiſh* Principles: Witneſs the huge ſlaughters of the *Waldenſes*, the perſecutions of the *Bohemian* Brethren, and of many others throughout Chriſtendom in the former Ages: And ſince *Proteſtant-Reformation*, how have the *Romiſh Zealots* filled *Europe* with the ſlaughters of Chriſtians within their reach, in *France*, *Germany*, *Spain*, *Italy*, *England*, *Scotland*, the *Netherlands*. In *Ireland*, *Piedmont* and *Poland*, their Cruelty is freſh in memory. And the ſlain cannot be numbred for multitude; they were killed by Thouſands, Ten thouſands, Hundred thouſands, at one and the ſame Perſecution. And the Tragedies have been acted where the Name of *Proteſtant* was well known, yea, where Proteſtants were under the ſhelter of the Law. For the Jeſuits unceſſantly ſtir up the Princes to fall upon their people againſt Law, and without provocation given, and after things have been ſetled, to break their Agreements with them. And the Pope himſelf is the Contriver or Applauder of theſe Miſchiefs, and the ſucceſful execution thereof, is received at *Rome* with joy and triumph, as the Murtherers

therers in the *Pariſian* Maſſacre were highly extolled by the Pope, and rewarded with ſuch ſpiritual Graces as his Holineſs uſeth to beſtow.

SECT. V.

That whereſoever it finds Encouragement, it is reſtleſs, till it bears down all before it, or hath put all in diſorder.

MAy we judg by theſe things, how a Party devoted to the See of *Rome*, are to be truſted and cheriſhed in a Proteſtant Nation, who mind the ſecuring of themſelves and their poſterity, from the ſharpeſt Perſecutions; eſpecially conſidering the Third Branch of the Charge, *That in any State, where they find advantage, or fit matter to work upon, they are reſtleſs, till they bear down all, or put all in diſorder.*

Popery hath its formed Combinations, and ſeeled Correſpondencies over all Chriſtendom, under the Supreme Direction and Government of the Congregation at *Rome*, for the propagation of the Faith; which ſent over ſwarms of *Seminary Prieſts*, *Jeſuits*, and *Fryars* of all ſorts, who made their Hives in *England*.

The ſeveral *PARLIAMENTS* of the later times of King *James*, repreſented to the King how the *Popiſh Recuſants* had dangerouſly increaſed their Numbers and Inſolencies, having great expectation from the *Treaties* with *Spain*, and the interpoſing of *Foreign Princes* for Indulgence to them; how they openly and uſually reſorted to the Churches and Chappels of *Foreign Ambaſſadors*, their more then uſual concourſe to the City, and their frequent Conventicles and Conferences there; how their children were educated in many Foreign *Seminaries* appropriated to the *Engliſh* Fugitives; what ſwarms of Prieſts and Jeſuits came into the Land; many Popiſh and Seditious Books licentiouſly

printed and dispersed. From which Causes, as from bitter Roots, most dangerous Effects both to Church and State would follow. For the Popish Religion is incompatible with ours; it draws with it an unavoidable dependance upon Foreign Princes; it opens a wide gap for popularity in any who shall draw too great a party; it hath a restless spirit, and will strive by these gradations. If it once get connivance, it will press for Toleration; if that should be obtained, it must have an Equality; from thence it will aspire to a Superiority, and never rest till it hath wrought the subversion of true Religion.

In the several *PARLIAMENTS* of King *Charles* the First, not one *Publick Grievance* was more insisted on, then the *Growth of POPERY*. In the Third PARLIAMENT of that King, at a Conference between the Lords and Commons about *Popish Recusants*, one of the Principal Secretaries of State spake thus: "Give me leave to tell "you what I know, That These now both vaunt at home, "and write to their Friends abroad, they hope all will "be well, and doubt not to prevail, and win ground upon "us: And a little to awaken the Care and Zeal of our "Learned and Grave Fathers, it is fit that they take notice "of that Hierarchy, which is already Established in com- "petition with their Lordships: For they have already a "Bishop consecrated by the Pope. This Bishop hath his "subalternate Officers of all kinds, as *Vicars General*, "*Arch-Deacons*, *Rural Deans*, *Apparitors*, and such like; "neither are these nominal and titular Officers alone, but "they all execute their Jurisdiction, and make their ordina- "ry Visitation throughout the Kingdom, keep Courts, and "determine Ecclesiastical Causes; and, which is an argu- "ment of more consequence, they keep ordinary intelli- "gence by their Agents at *Rome*, and hold correspondencies "with the Nuncio's and Cardinals both at *Bruxels*, and in

France.

"*France*. Neither are the Seculars alone grown to this "height, but the Regulars are more active and dangerous, "and have taken deep root. They have already planted "their Societies and Colledges of both Sexes. They have "ſetled Revenues, Houſes, Libraries, Veſtments, and all "other neceſſary proviſions to travel, or ſtay at home; nay, "even at this time they intend to hold a concurrent Aſſem- "bly with this Parliament.

In *Ireland* a *Popiſh Clergy* far more numerous then the *Proteſtant*, was in full exerciſe of all *Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction*, by *Arch-Biſhops*, *Biſhops*, *Vicars*, *General Officiats*, and a *Vicar Apoſtolical*. And they had a ſpecial *Cardinal* at *Rome* for their Protector.

Among other Projects, a Conſultation and Overture of reconciling *England* and *Rome*, was ſet on foot. Some of Eminency in the Church of *England*, gave advantage to the Project, by declaring, That only the *Puritans* among the *Proteſtants*, and the *Jeſuits* among the *Papiſts*, obſtructed the Peace of *Chriſtendom*. Some prime Agent of the Pope, made a ſolemn offer of a Cardinalſhip to Biſhop *Laud*, at the time of his tranſlation to the See of *Canterbury*. *Sanct a Clara* preſumed to dedicate his Book to the King, wherein the *Articles* of the Church of *England* were examined by the *Roman Standard*, and diſtorted to the ſenſe of the Council of *Trent*. The Pope had Three Nuncio's, *Panzani*, *Con*, and *Roſeti*, ſucceſſively reſiding in *England*, to work upon this State by advantage of the Project of *Reconciliation*.

This Faction had many Irons in the Fire, and many ſtrings to their Bow. They had their Agents in Court, City and Country. They had their Spyes in the Houſes of great men, and ſuch as kept continual watch over them that had the chief ſway of Publick Affairs. Their work was to raiſe and foſter Jealouſies between the King and His Peo-

ple,

ple, to caſt things into the hurry of Faction, Prejudice and confuſed Motion. And whether the Court or Popular Faction prevailed, they thought it equally advantagious to their Deſigns, which was to unſettle the preſent State, and work Mutations. Such *Incendiaries* are the *Factors* of *Rome*, and ſuch buſie *Engineers* in the Confuſions of *Chriſtendom*. Can any that conſiders the foregoing paſſages, doubt of the powerful and ſpecial Agency of the Court of *Rome*, in the Commotions that followed. A *Venetian* Agent in *England*, intimate with Nuncio *Panzani*, and privy to all his Negotiations, made this Obſervation; *If one may make judgment of things future, by things paſt, this Realm ſo divided into many Factions in matter of Religion, and that of the Catholick increaſing daily, will in time be troubled and torn with Civil Warrs.*

SECT. VI.

The PAPISTS pretenſion of Loyalty and Merit in the King's Cauſe, Examined.

THE great Plea and boaſting of the *Romaniſts*, is, *Their pretenſion of Merit in the King's Cauſe.* The truth is, the *Papiſts* knew that the PARLIAMENT was fully bent, and deeply engaged againſt them, and therefore deſpaired of any good to themſelves by a direct and open compliance with them, whatever undiſcerned influence they might have on their Counſels: So that Neceſſity made them to ſerve the King in that Warr. And they brought neither Succeſs nor Reputation to His Majeſties Affairs; nor did He care to own their Aſſiſtance more then as juſtified by the preſent neceſſity. And they have little reaſon to upbraid the *Proteſtants* with the ſcandal of that Warr; for whatſoever was alledged in defence thereof, by the PARLIAMENT and their Adherents, as much hath

hath been written by very Eminent School-men and Doctors of the *Roman* Church, for the Intereſt of the people, and the Conſent of the Cities and the Peers in Defenſive Arms. Which they have written over and above their peculiar Principle of the Popes Univerſal Power of Depoſing Kings that are unfit for Government.

As for the woful Cataſtrophe of thoſe Commotions, it hath been manifeſted to the world by ſuch as undertook to juſtifie it, when Authority ſhould require: *That the year before the Kings death, a ſelect number of Jeſuits being ſent from their whole Party in* England, *conſulted both the* Faculty *of* Sorbon, *and the* Conclave *at* Rome, *touching the Lawfulneſs and Expediency of promoting the* Change of Government, *by* making away the King, *whom they deſpaired to turn from his Hereſie: It was debated and concluded in both places, That for the Advancement of the Catholick Cauſe, it was Lawful and Expedient to carry on that Alteration of State.* This Determination was effectually purſued by many Jeſuits that came over, and acted their parts in ſeveral Diſguiſes. After that execrable Fact was perpetrated on the Perſon of our Soveraign, if we may believe moſt credible reports, there were many Witneſſes of the great joy among the *Engliſh Convents* and *Seminaries*, and other companies of Papiſts beyond Sea, as having overcome their great Enemy, and done their main work.

Many of their Chief ones ſought the favour of the Uſurpers, with offers of doing them ſervice. One of great note among them, in a Book entituled, *Grounds of Obedience and Government*, undertook the ſolution of the Grand Caſe of thoſe Times: *That if a People be diſſolved into the State of* Anarchy, *their Promiſe made to their expelled Governour, binds no more; they are remitted to the force of Nature to provide for themſelves. That the old Magiſtrates*

giſtrates Right, ſtands upon the Common Peace, and that is transferred to his Rival, by the Title of Quiet Poſſeſſion. Conformably to theſe Principles, they addreſs their Petition, *To the Supream Authority, the PARLIAMENT of the Commonwealth of* England. They affirmed, *They had generally taken, and punctually kept the* Engagement; and promiſed, *That if they might enjoy their Religion, they would be the moſt quiet and uſeful Subjects.*

Of their Actings ſince His Majeſties Reſtauration, and the Jealouſies and Rumours about them, let men judg as they find by the Evidences that are given.

SECT. VII.

The Reſult of the whole Diſcourſe touching the Popiſh Party.

AND now let it be duly weighed, Whether the Papiſts of theſe Dominions have in later times changed their former Principles and Intereſts, or have only taken another method of greater Artifice and Subtilty, as the change of times hath given them direction and advantage. The ſcope of the whole preceding Diſcourſe, is to call in queſtion thoſe high pretenſions of theirs, and to croſs their Aims at great Power and Truſt: But it is not directed againſt the Security of their Perſons or Fortunes, or any meet Indulgence or Clemency towards them. Let them have their Faith to themſelves, without being vexed with ſnares, or any afflicted; the State always providing to obviate the forementioned Principles and Practices of Diſloyalty, and the diffuſing of the leaven of their Superſtition. The Inference of the whole is this, That they be not admitted to a capacity of evil and dangerous influence upon the Affairs of the Kingdom, or of interrupting and perplexing the courſe of things that concern the publike.

SECT.

SECT. VIII.

That the Reformed Religion makes good Christians, and good Subjects.

AS true Religion is the most Noble End, so it is the best Foundation of all Political Government. And it is the felicity of the State of *England*, to rest upon this Basis, even Reformed Christianity, or the Primitive and Apostolick Religion recovered out of the Apostacy of the later times, and severed from that new kind of *Paganism*, or *Pagano-Christianism*, under which it lay much oppressed and overwhelmed, but not extinguished. Its wholsome Doctrine contained in its publick Confessions, makes *good Christians*, and *good Subjects*. It teacheth obedience to Civil Magistrates, without the controle of any Superior or Collateral Power. Nor is it concerned, if dangerous Positions fall from the Pens of some Writers. And notwithstanding the Adversaries Cavils, the Divines of Authority and solid Reputation in the Protestant Churches, do with a general Consent maintain the Rights of Princes and Soveraign Powers, against all Disobedience. If any aberration in Practice, hath been found in its Professors, it is not to be charged therewith, because it condemns it; but the general practice in this point, hath been conformable to the Doctrine.

The Reformation in *England*, for its Legality and Orderliness, is unquestionable. In *Germany* it was setled and defended by Princes and free Cities, that governed their own Signiories and Territories, paying only a respect of Homage to the Emperor. In *Helvetia* it began by the Senates of the *Cantons*. It was received in *Geneva* by that Republick, after the Civil Government had been reformed by strong Papists. In the Provinces of the *Netherlands* it

was ſpread many years before the Union againſt the *Spaniard*; which Union was not made upon the ſcore of *Religion*, but of *State*. The manner of its beginning in *Scotland*, is by ſome attributed to a National Diſpoſition, the aſperity and vehemency thereof, is ſaid to be greater in times of *Popery*, and to be much mitigated by the *Reformation*. For *France*, we may take the Teſtimony of King *JAMES*, who was jealous enough for the Power of Kings. He ſaid, That *he never knew yet, that the* French Proteſtants *took Arms againſt their King*. In the firſt Troubles, they ſtood only upon their Defence; before they took Arms, they were burned and Maſſacred every where. The firſt Quarrel did not begin for Religion, but becauſe when King *Francis* the Second was under Age, they had been the refuge of the Princes of the Blood expelled from the Court, who knew not elſe where to take Sanctuary; and that it ſhall not be found that they made any other Warr.

It is not for this Diſcourſe to intermeddle with all the Actions of Proteſtant Subjects towards their Princes, that have happened in Chriſtendom: Let them ſtand or fall by the Laws and Polity under which they live. Whenſoever they have been diſloyal, they have ſwerved from the known and received Rules of their Profeſſion. Through the corruption of Mankind, Subjects of whatſoever perſwaſion, are prone to Murmurings and Mutinies. Sometimes Oppreſſion makes them mad. Sometimes a Jealouſie of Incroachments upon their Legal Rights and Liberties, raiſeth Diſtempers and Conteſts. And ſometimes an unbridled, wanton affecting of inordinate Liberty, makes them inſolent and licentious. But over and above theſe common Sources of Rebellion, Popery hath a peculiar one, and that of the greateſt Force, the Conſcience of Religious Obligations, and the Zeal of the Catholick Faith. Proteſtants have never diſowned their King for difference

ference in Religion, as the moſt of the *Roman Catholicks* of *France* dealt with *Henry* the Fourth, by the Popes inſtigation. And in their greateſt Enormities, they have never attempted the Stabbing and Poyſoning of Princes that ſtood in their way, which the Jeſuits teach their Diſciples.

SECT. IX.

The Reformed Religion is the permanent Intereſt of this Kingdom.

AS the Proteſtant or Reformed Religion, is the true Primitive Chriſtianity, ſo it is the ſtable and permanent Intereſt of *England*, and the ſure Foundation of its Proſperity. The King of *England* is the moſt Mighty Prince of this Profeſſion, and becomes the more Potent over Chriſtendom, by being the Head and Chief of the whole Proteſtant Party. And it is well known, That by the Support and Defence of this Cauſe, the Nation hath encreaſed in Honour, and Wealth, and Power.

The Peoples rooted Averſneſs from Popery, is moſt apparent, and their Jealouſies work upon any more then uſual Inſolence or Confidence of the Papiſts. The *Royalliſts* as well as others, have been Allarm'd, and manifeſted their Zeal againſt it. And His Majeſties Averſneſs from it, is ſo fully declared by His Conſtancy amidſt Temptations, in the time of His Exile, and now ſince His Return, that for His Honours ſake, it is made very penal for any to ſuggeſt that He would introduce it; the Law preſuming, That ſuch ſuggeſtion muſt needs proceed from an evil mind.

And what Prince that hath caſt off the Popes yoke, would willingly come under it again? A Foreign Statesman of the *Roman* Profeſſion, hath obſerved it as a Barr

againſt the projected Reconciliation between *England* and *Rome*, That it could not be effected without Conceſſions on both ſides, contrary to the Maxims of both parties. *This Realm* (ſaith he) *is perverſly addicted to maintain its own reſolute Opinion of Excluding the Popes Authority. And the Court of* Rome *is more ſollicitous to remove whatſoever is contrary to its Temporal Grandure, then to extirpate ſuch Hereſies as this Realm is infected with.* To inſtance in that one point of the Approbation or Toleration of the Oath of Allegiance; though ſome Catholick Doctors had with their Tongues and Pens maintained the lawfulneſs of that Oath; yet thereby, and by opening ſome other points of high conſequence, they had ſo diſpleaſed the Pope, that could they have been catch't, they were ſure to have been burn'd or ſtrangled for it. But what allurement is there to diſpoſe the Monarchs of the Earth to ſubject themſelves to the Sacerdotal Empire of *Rome*, or to endeavour an Accommodation with it? Hath Popery its advantages to diſpoſe Subjects to ſecurity and blind obedience? So it hath its advantages to looſen the Bonds of Allegiance, and foment Rebellion in Subjects; when Proteſtancy ſeaſons them with principles of unſtained Loyalty. A people muzled in ignorance and ſuperſtition, are more eaſily ſeduced from their obedience to Magiſtrates, and carried headlong by thoſe that have dominion over their Conſciences. But Underſtanding and Knowledg makes men conſiderate, and more eaſily manageable by a juſt and prudent Government.

As for the Clergy's Intereſt, though the Proteſtant Religion doth not affect that exceſſive Pomp and Splendor of Church-men, which the Popiſh doth; yet it is taken for granted, That neither Conſcience nor Intereſt will permit the Biſhops and Clergy of *England*, to unite to the See of *Rome*. Their Doctrine is too pure, and their Judgment too clear

clear for a full compliance with Popery: And they know what it is to come under the Papal Yoke, to diveſt themſelves, and receive new Orders from *Rome*, and to be diſplaced and ſet behind the *Veteran* Soldiers of the *Roman* Camp, whoſe turns muſt be firſt ſerved.

SECT. X.

It is for the behoof of Religion and true Piety, and for the Intereſt of this State, That Reformed Chriſtianity be ſetled in its full Extent.

IF it be reſolved, *That Proteſtancy is the truth of Chriſtianity*, and alſo, *the ſtability of England*; it follows, That this Profeſſion muſt not be ſtreightned and leſſened, but inlarged and cheriſhed, according to its true Extent; and the Rule and Square of the Eccleſiaſtical State, muſt be commenſurate thereunto. It ſhould be the meaſure of all mens Zeal and Activity in Rites and Opinions, whatſoever is neceſſary to its ſupport and advancement, is conſtantly to be aſſerted; and about things impertinent thereunto, contention ſhould utterly ceaſe. This is to advance the Kingdom of God among men, and to encreaſe the Church's glory upon earth. But by needleſs Schiſms and Factions, to weaken the common Intereſt of Reformed Chriſtianity, is to diſſipate the Church of God, and to defeat the great Ends of the Chriſtian Religion, which are, Sound and ſtrong Faith in Chriſt and his Promiſes, unfeigned devotion, purity of heart, innocence and integrity of life, common charity, brotherly love, humility, mutual forbearance, and condeſcention, unſhaken peace and concord.

As this Latitude promotes the great Deſigns of Chriſts Goſpel, ſo it ſettles this Nation, and is, for matter of Religion, its right and ſure Baſis. Every good Foundation, lyes adequate to the Building to be laid thereon: So any Polity Civil

Civil or Eccleſiaſtical, ſhould be proportionate to the people to be governed thereby. The people that are of moment in the Ballance of this Nation, are, though not univerſally, yet more generally rooted in *Proteſtantiſm*, as it is taken in its due latitude, and not as unduly reſtrained by the paſſions and intereſts of men: For in this they are one, though divided about leſſer things.

There hath been much diſcord between men of ſeveral Perſwaſions, that throughly accord with each other in the ſame common Faith, as almoſt to expunge one another out of the Liſt of *Proteſtants*. Surely this is a great error and a diſadvantage on all hands, as well to thoſe that ſtand on the Vantage-ground, as to others: For they that carry it after this ſort, do weaken the Common Intereſt of true Religion, and ſtrengthen the Common Adverſary that is irreconcilable, and diſparage themſelves as a narrow Party or Faction. That all thoſe who heartily embrace the *Engliſh Reformation* eſtabliſhed by Law, are Proteſtants, will not be queſtioned by men of temperate ſpirits. And concerning the reſidue, let the ſober-minded judge, Whether they that aſſent to the Doctrine of Faith contained in the Articles of the *Church of England*, and do worſhip God according to that Faith, have right to be eſteemed Proteſtants. Now if Proteſtancy taken in its due Extent, doth ſway the Nation, and is able to ſettle its Peace againſt the Competition of any *Rival*; ſhould it not be encompaſſed according to that Extent, as much as is poſſible, in the Polity of this State?

SECT.

SECT. XI.

How momentous in the Ballance of the Nation, thoſe Proteſtants are, that diſſent from the preſent Eccleſiaſtical Polity.

WHether cogent Reaſon ſpeaks for this Latitude, be it now conſidered, *How momentous in the Ballance of this Nation, thoſe Proteſtants are, which are diſſatisfied in the preſent Eccleſiaſtical Polity.* They are every where ſpred through City and Countrey; they make no ſmall part of all ranks and ſorts of men; by Relations and Commerce they are ſo woven into the Nations Intereſt, that it is not eaſie to ſever them, without unravelling the whole. They are not excluded from among the *Nobility*, among the *Gentry* they are not a few; but none are of more importance then they in the Trading part of the people, and thoſe that live by Induſtry, upon whoſe hands the Buſineſs of the Nation lyes much. It hath been noted, that ſome who bear them no good will, have ſaid, *That the very Air of Corporations is infected with their Contagion.* And in whatſoever degree they are, high or low, ordinarily for good underſtanding, ſteddineſs and ſoberneſs, they are not inferior to others of the ſame Rank and Quality; neither do they want the Rational Courage of *Engliſh* Men.

As for the Miniſters of this Perſwaſion, ſome have called them *Fools* for their *Inconformity*; others are reported to have ſaid, *That the Church ſhould not ſo eaſily be rid of them, as if their Conformity had been dreaded by them.* Some have pitied them, wiſhing *that they would Conform*; and others revile them, ſaying, *Conform, or not Conform, never truſt them.* Howbeit, they make Solemn Appeals to the Moſt High God, *That they dare not Conform, for Con-*

Conſcience ſake; and *that it is not in the power of their own wills to relieve them.* And whatſoever their grounds of diſſent be, they hold it out againſt all hopes of Indulgence, whilſt many of them live in Neceſſities, and moſt of them upon the kindneſs of others.

It is now about Five years ſince a Full and Vigorous *Act of Uniformity*. at once cleared the Church of the ſuppoſed Enemies of her Polity. All Corporations have been New-model'd and changed as to the Principles and Tempers of perſons, for the better ſecuring of the Government in Church and State. The Private Meetings for Religious Worſhip (termed *Conventicles*) are ſtrictly prohibited, Deportation being the Penalty upon the Third Conviction. And for the breaking and diſſipating of the whole Party, it is provided by another Law, *That the Non-conforming Miniſters be removed five miles diſtant from the places of their uſual ſupports and influences.* Such care is taken, and ſuch is the advantage both of Law and Power, to ſtrengthen the State, and reſtrain Diſſenters. Nevertheleſs, the State *Eccleſiaſtical* hath advanced little in the eſteem, acceptance, or acquieſcence of people. The Diſſenters are ſtill the ſame, and are rather ſtrengthned in their averſneſs. And thoſe of them that repair to the publick Aſſemblies, retain their Principles of *Reformation* (as they ſpeak) without ſeperation. The *Indifferent* ſort of men are ſtill indifferent, and it may be have ſome kindneſs for the depreſſed Party, and pity them in their Sufferings.

SECT.

SECT. XII.

The Extirpation of the Diſſenters is both difficult and unprofitable.

PEradventure ſome think their total Extirpation to be the ſureſt way to publick Security and Peace; and that great Severities will do the work. But Violent compulſion and Terror, comports not with the nature of Chriſtian Religion, which is a *Rational Service*, and ſeeks a *willing people*; and is not at all in truth, where it is not received with *judgment* and *free choice*.

Beſides, the ſucceſs of ſuch a courſe may be doubted of, ſince the Proteſtant ſpirit is not like the Popiſh, Cruel and outragious; and the nature of *Engliſh* men is not bloody, but generouſly compaſſionate. Wherefore in this Land to execute Extremity upon an intelligent, ſober and peaceable ſort of men, ſo numerous among all ranks, may prove exceeding difficult, unleſs it be executed by ſuch Inſtruments as may ſtrike terror into the whole Nation. The Civil Officers in general, may not be found ſo forward to afflict their quiet and harmleſs neighbours. Moreover, if ſeverity uſed once for all, could extinguiſh an oppoſite party, there might be ſome plea of Policy; but when Severity muſt ſtill be juſtified with more Severity, without an end, it is like to prove unlucky to the undertakers.

Nor is the Nation like to grow the better by the ſubverſion of this ſort, if it were effected. For in them no ſmall part of the Nations Sobriety, Frugality, and Induſtry doth reſide. They are not the *Great Waſters*, but moſtly in the number of *Getters*. In moſt places the diſplaceing of them hath not encreaſed Civility and good Converſation among men; and it makes not for their diſhonour, that many will ſwear and be drunk, to declare they are none of them.

There is ſomething of more importance. To purge the Nation of this people, may be to purge out more of its Vitals than the ſtrength of this State can bear. To ſuppreſs thoſe that are reckoned among the chief in Trading, and whoſe Commerce is ſo general, may beget a general diffidence and inſecurity in Traders, and may help to drive away Trade it ſelf, and ſend it to an emulous and encroaching Nation. May we mind, without offence, the event of things among us? The buſineſs of the Nation hath not proceeded with the current and free paſſage expected; nor doth its Wealth and Glory encreaſe. Trade languiſheth, and Traders fail in great Numbers; the Rents of Lands fall; there is ſcarcity of Money in City and Country; the Neceſſities and Difficulties of private Eſtates are common, and Complainings are general. And after a continued decay, things are at laſt fallen and ſunk much lower in the Ruins of the City of *LONDON*. 'Tis the Nations happineſs to be re-eſtabliſhed upon the Ancient, Legal Foundations; but it is the right ſtating and purſuing of its true Intereſt, by which it comes to a firm conſiſtency, and proportionable growth.

But this ſort of men are inquiſitive, and therefore troubleſome to Rulers, to whom Obedience without diſputing, is moſt acceptable. It is fit indeed they be as humble and modeſt, as inquiſitive. Yet theſe inquiring men ſtand much by that main Principle of *Proteſtantiſm*, the *Judgment of Diſcretion*. Indeed, the Churches Infallibility, and the peoples implicite Faith, may help againſt all Diſputes: but it cannot be ſo in *England*, whilſt the people read the Scriptures, and the eſtabliſhed Doctrine of Faith remains with us: And if no greater latitude can be allowed, then is at preſent, a Race of *Non-conformiſts* is like to run parallel with the *Conformiſts* to the worlds end.

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

The representation of this Difficulty, is no Threatning to Rulers, or Intimation of Rebellion.

SUch as take this Repreſentation for a Challenge to the Higher Powers, and a Demand of LIBERTY, and a Threatning, if it be not granted, are too far tranſported with Paſſion. What can be of greater concernment to Governors, then to diſcern and conſider the ſtate of their people, as it is indeed? And why may it not be minded by Subjects, and ſpoken of without any hint or thought of Rebellion? If Subjects uſe Arguments of Equity and Safety to Princes, it doth not preſently ſpeak a Demand: And it is no Threatning to ſay, *That Rulers themſelves muſt be ruled by Reaſon, or do worſe.*

The truth is, ſhould they whoſe Caſe is here argued, upon this ſcore meditate Rebellion and War, they were abandoned of their own Reaſon, and would hurry themſelves into a precipice of manifeſt Ruin. To riſh into ways of violence, evidently deſtroys their Intereſt, which ſtands in maintaining ſuch works, and providing ſuch things as are profitable to the Commonwealth, that it may be known that the publike good conſiſts by them, as much as by others. To abide in their ſtations, to have patience under grievances, to ſweeten their Governors by humility and modeſty, is their beſt ſecurity, who ſtand or fall together with the true Intereſt of the Nation.

Nevertheleſs, though a peoples diſcompoſure doth not foreſpeak *Wars* and *Tumults*, yet it may denounce *Woe* and *Miſery*. Can nothing undo a Kingdom, but *Rebellion* and *Treaſon*? Was there ever a greater Separation from the Church of *England*, then now is? Was there ever leſs ſatisfaction among Multitudes every where, that

do yet frequent her Aſſemblies? A State, that is free from violent Convulſive motions, may fall into a *Paralytick*, or *Hectick* Diſtemper, or an *Atrophy*. The Current of Vital Blood may be ſtopt in its Veins. There be ſullen Mutinies, that make no noiſe, but may looſen all the Joynts and Ligaments of Policy.

SECT. XIV.

The Setling of the Nation by an Eſtabliſhed Order, a Toleration, *and a* Connivence.

IF the Intereſt both of Reformed Chriſtianity, and of this Kingdom, require a more comprehenſive ſtate of Religion, the true Extent of that State will be no impertinent or unmeet Inquiry. Such is the complicated condition of Humane Affairs, that it is exceeding difficult to deviſe a Rule or Model that ſhall provide for all whom Equity will plead for. Therefore the Prudent and Sober will acquieſce in any Conſtitution that is in ſome good ſort proportionable to the Ends of Government. All that are thought fit to abide with ſecurity in any ſtate, may be reduced to Three ſorts: First, Thoſe that are of the Eſtabliſhed and Approved Order. 2. Such as may be Tolerated under certain Reſtrictions. 3. Such as may be only connived at. And accordingly the Setling of a Nation may be made up of an *Eſtabliſhment*, a *Limited Toleration*, and a *Diſcreet Connivence*. To be comprehended within the *Eſtabliſhment*, it is requiſite not only to be of importance in the Publick Intereſt, but alſo of Principles congruous to ſuch ſtated Order in the Church, as the ſtability of the Commonwealth requires. As for the two later, *Toleration* and *Connivence*, they muſt be regulated with reſpect not only to common Charity, but alſo to the Safety of the Eſtabliſhed Order.

SECT

SECT. XV.

Of the Eſtabliſhed Order in RELIGION, *and the Moderation therein required.*

AS for the *Eſtabliſhed Order*, we preſume not here to intermeddle with the Form or Species of Church-Government; but only to conſider the preſcribed Uniformity of Judgment and Practice. Evident reaſon ſpeaks, That this be not narrow, but as broad and comprehenſive as it is poſſible, that of it ſelf, by its own force, it may be chief in ſway, and controle all diſſenting parties. On the other hand, it muſt not be looſe and incoherent, but well compacted, that it may attain the Ends of Diſcipline, which are to promote ſound Doctrine, and godly life, and to keep out Idolatry, Superſtition, and all wicked Error and Practice that tends to the defeating of the Power of Chriſtian Verity. Now theſe Ends do not require a Conſtitution of narrower bounds, then things neceſſary to Chriſtian Faith and Life, and godly Order in the Church. Theſe things muſt be maintained, and clearly ſtated; but whatſoever is more then theſe, may be matter of good intention and devotion to ſome, but an occaſion of ſtumbling to others.

If it be ſaid, *Who ſhall judg what things are neceſſary?* This doubt might ſoon be reſolved, if paſſion, and prejudice, and private ends were vanquiſhed. But however, let it be put to the Reaſon and Conſcience of the Church of *England*: Why ſhould not the great things of Chriſtianity in the hands of wiſe Builders, be a ſufficient Foundation of Church-Unity and Concord? What need hath the Church to enjoyn more then what is neceſſary to Faith and Order? Is not Moderation and Charity far more excellent, then glorying in Opinions, Formalities, and petty matters, to the regret of many Conſciences? What if thoſe that queſtion her

her Injunctions, ſhould be weak, nice and captious? It is about matters of Divine Worſhip, wherein God hath proclaimed his Jealouſie; and therefore if they being over-jealous, do erre, they deſerve pity.

Our Eccleaſiaſtical Superiors are here earneſtly beſought, Calmly and ſeriouſly to review the preſcribed Uniformity, and to conſider how ſome parts thereof, which at the beſt are but things indifferent, have been long diſputed, and by what manner of men, and what hath been argued for and againſt them; and how this Difference hath held, and ſtill encreaſed, from Biſhop *Hooper* in King *Edward*'s time, to the preſent *Non-conformiſts*; and then to judg whether a rational and conſcientious man may not poſſibly diſſent from ſome of theſe things, or at leaſt doubt of their Lawfulneſs; and in caſe of ſuch diſſenting or doubting, what he ſhould do, ſeeing the Apoſtle ſaith in the caſe of Meats, *He that doubts, is damned if he eat, becauſe he eateth not of faith.* Can a man by Subſcription and Practice, allow thoſe things which his Conſcience rationally doubts to be ſinful?

It is Honour and Power enough for the Church, to be enabled by her Authority to inforce Gods Commandments. She is obſerved and honoured as a Mother indeed, when by her Wiſdom and Care, her Children walk orderly according to the Chriſtian Inſtitution; and it may ſuffice her to chaſtiſe thoſe of them that walk contrary to Chriſt. Though ſhe be of *venerable Authority*, yet ſhe doth not claim an *Infalibility*; and therefore ſhe cannot ſettle the Conſcience by her ſole Warrant, but ſtill leaves room for doubting. And in preſcribed Forms and Rites of Religion, the Conſcience that doth its office, will inevitably interpoſe and concern it ſelf; and it being unſatisfied, jarrs and rents will follow. Woful Experience cryes unto us, *No more of ſuch Injunctions then needs muſt.*

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The indiſputable Truths of Faith, and the indiſpenſable Duties of Life, are the main object of Church-Diſcipline; therefore an ill choice is made when the vigor of Diſcipline is exerciſed about leſſer and more diſpenſable things of meer Humane Determination.

The Sons of the Church of *England* commend the Moderation uſed in the Articles of Religion, being formed in words of that extent, that men of different Perſwaſions about the Doctrines of *Predeſtination*, *Divine Grace*, and *Free-will*, did alike ſubſcribe them. Nevertheleſs, the preſent *Orders* and *Ceremonies* inexorably impoſed, have been as much diſputed among the Godly Learned, as thoſe different Opinions about the Doctrines aforeſaid; and yet who can think they are of as much importance to the Subſtance of Religion?

Moreover, men might more eaſily agree in the uſe of theſe little things, or of ſome of them, were their Internal Judgments ſpared, and Subſcriptions not injoyned. They may bear with others in the practice of ſome things, which themſelves cannot practice. They may ſubmit to ſome things, which they cannot approve; and that not for unworthy Ends, but for Conſcience ſake; and chuſe rather to acquieſce in a *Tolerable State*, which for the main is ſound and good, rather then to endeavour a total Change, which may be miſchievous, and at beſt is full of hazard. Wiſe men know, That by haſty Changes they do not come to reſt and quietneſs, but only change their Old Grievances for New ones. If Practice ſufficiently uniform, that is to ſay, without any ſcandalous difference, may be obtained from men of different Perſwaſions, Why ſhould Uniformity of Judgment be exalted, and men tempted in doubtful points, to ſet their Conſciences on the Rack? If any number of Diſſenters were willing to do their uttermoſt towards Compliance, why ſhould

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needleſs Choak-pears, which they could not ſwallow, be forc'd upon them? If the Church's Authority be had in reverence, if Order and Peace be kept, what matter is it from what ſpeculative Principles ſuch obſervance proceeds? Though a man ſo complying, be not of the ſame mind with his Superiors, yet he may have this honeſt Catholick Principle, To promote the common Intereſt of Reformed Chriſtianity, and to dread the weakning and ſhattering of it by needleſs Schiſms. As for a narrow-bounded Uniformity both in Opinions, and petty Obſervations, it is no more neceſſary in the Church, then Uniformity of Complexions and Viſages in the ſame Civil State; and is indeed no more attainable, where a generous Freedom of Judgment is allowed.

SECT. XVI.

Whether the Diſſenters are capable of being brought into ſuch a Comprehenſion.

WHilſt Reaſon is urged on their behalf that are left without the lines of the preſent Eſtabliſhment, ſome haply may ask, *Will they themſelves hearken to reaſon?* Be it ſuppoſed that ſome among them ſeem not reducible to a due publick Order; but another ſort there are, and thoſe of chiefeſt moment, whoſe principles are fit for Government; the ſtability whereof hath been experimented in thoſe Countreys where they have had the effectual concurrence of the Civil Powers. Their Way never yet obtained in *England*, nor were they ever favoured with the Magiſtrates vigorous aid, ſo much as for an Accommodation with the Eſtabliſhed Polity: But their difficulties have ſtill encreaſed; and how ſtreight ſoever the Terms impoſed on them, were in times before, the after-times have ſtill made them ſtreighter. Wherefore

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if they have been too much addicted to their own Opinions, or have committed ſome errors in the management of their Affairs, it is no marvel. It was not eaſie for them, being deſtitute of the Magiſtrates influence, and lying under great diſcouragement and diſadvantage, always to keep ſtable and ſure footing in ſuch a ſlippery place as Church-Diſcipline. The aſſerting of their Diſcipline, is not here intended; but the Inquiry is, *Whether they be of a Judgment and Temper that makes them capable of being brought under the Magiſtrates Paternal Care and Conduct, to ſuch a ſtated Order as will comport with this Church and Kingdom?*

This is no undertaking Diſcourſe, it preſumes only to offer its Reaſon to equal and impartial *Readers*. When a Divine of great fame, and of much eſteem with the chiefeſt of the *Engliſh* Clergy, was taxed by the Jeſuit his Adverſary, for being no *Proteſtant*, as refuſing to ſubſcribe the Nine and thirty Articles; he judged it a ſufficient Anſwer to teſtifie his belief, *That the Doctrine of this Church was ſo pure and holy, that whoſoever lived according to it, ſhould undoubtedly be ſaved; & that there was nothing in it that might give juſt cauſe to any to forſake the Communion, or diſturb the Peace thereof.* Who, or what is there almoſt, that this or the like Latitude would not encompaſs, when hearty endeavours are put forth to gain men? The ſame Catholick Spirit may dwell both in larger and ſtricter judgments. One that cannot ſubſcribe to all things contained in a Volume of Doctrines and Rules compiled by men ſubject to error, may be ready to joyn with any Church not depraved in the ſubſtance of Religion, that doth not impoſe upon his belief or practice, things unſound or doubtful, as the terms of her Communion.

The *Presbyterians* generally hold the *Church of England* to be a true Church, though defective in its Order and Diſcipline; and frequent the Worſhip of God in the pub-

like Assemblies. And many of those that press earnestly after further Reformation, do yet communicate as well in the Sacraments, as the Word Preached, and Prayer. And a way might be opened for many more to do as much, by a safe and easie condescention of those in Authority.

The Ministers of the *Presbyterian* Perswasion, in their Propolals presented to His Majesty, declare, That they do not, nor ever did renounce the true Ancient Primitive *Episcopacy*, or Presidency, as it was ballanced or managed by a due commixtion of *Presbyters* therewith. That they are satisfied in their judgments concerning the Lawfulness of a Liturgy or Form of Worship; and they Petition His Majesty, That for the setling of the Church in Unity and Peace, some Learned, Godly, and Moderate Divines, indifferently chosen, may be employed to compile a Form, as much as may be, in Scripture-words; or at least to Revise, and effectually Reform the Old. Concerning Ceremonies, they profess to hold themselves obliged in every part of Divine Worship, to do all things decently and in order; and to be willing therein to be determined by Authority, in such things as being meerly circumstantial, are common to humane actions, and are to be ordered by the Light of Nature, and Humane Prudence, according to the general Rules of Gods Word. But as for divers Ceremonies formerly retained in the Church of *England*, in as much as they contribute nothing to the necessary decency which the Apostle required, and draw too near the significancy and moral efficacy of Sacraments, and have been rejected together with Popery, by many of the Reformed Churches abroad, and ever since the Reformation, have been matter of endless Dispute in this Church, and an occasion of great seperation, and are at the best, indifferent, and in their own nature mutable, they desire they be not imposed; and they heartily acknowledg his Majesty

ſty to be Supreme Governour over all Perſons, and over all Things and Cauſes in theſe his Dominions.

Upon theſe Propoſals, His Majeſty in His Declaration concerning Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, hath thus graciouſly expreſſed himſelf: "We muſt for the Honour of all thoſe of "either Perſwaſion, with whom We have conferred, de-"clare, That the Profeſſions and Deſires for the advance-"ment of true Piety and Godlineſs, are the ſame; their "profeſſions of Zeal for the Peace of the Church, the "ſame; of Affection and Duty to Us, the ſame. They all "approve Epiſcopacy; they all approve a ſet-form of Li-"turgy; and they all diſapprove and diſlike the ſin of Sa-"criledg and Alienation of the Revenues of the Church. "And if upon theſe Excellent Foundations, in ſubmiſſion "to which there is ſuch a harmony of Affections, any Su-"perſtructure ſhould be raiſed to the ſhaking of theſe "Foundations, or the contracting and leſſening of the "bleſſed gift of Charity, which is a vital part of Chri-"ſtian Religion, We ſhall think our ſelves very unfortu-"nate, and even ſuſpect that We are defective in that Ad-"miniſtration of Government with which God hath intruſt-"ed Us.

After theſe things, the Miniſters commiſſioned for the Review of the Liturgy, in their account of that Buſineſs, thus addreſs themſelves to His Majeſty: "Though the "Reverend Biſhops have not had time to conſider of our "Additions to the Liturgy, and of our Reply; We hum-"bly crave that it may be conſidered before a Determi-"nation be made. Though we ſeem to have laboured in "vain, we ſhall lay this Work of Reconciliation at Your "Majeſties feet. We muſt believe, that when Your Ma-"jeſty took our Conſent to a Liturgy to be a Foundati-"on, that would infer our Concord; You meant not, that "we ſhould have no Concord, but by conſenting to this

"Liturgy without any conſiderable Alterations. And "when Your Majeſty commanded us by Letters Patents, "to meet about ſuch Alterations as were needful, or expe- "dient to give ſatisfaction to tender Conſciences, and "the reſtoring and continuing of Peace and Unity; We "reſt aſſured it was not Your Majeſties ſenſe that thoſe "tender Conſciences ſhould be forced to practice all which "they judg unlawful, or not ſo much as a Ceremony "ſhould be abated them; or that our Treaty was only "to convert either party to the Opinion of another; and "that all our hopes of Liberty and Concord, conſiſted "only in diſputing the Biſhops into *Non-conformity*, or "coming in every Ceremony to their mind.

This is the Church's miſery, That when any particular Intereſt grows in Proſperity and Power, and can carry all before it, Condeſcention preſently ceaſeth on that ſide. And ſo the diſagreeing parties in the ſeveral viciſſitudes of Publick Affairs, tread down one another; and juſtifie themſelves by the like miſcarriages of their Oppoſites when time was. By this means the Church's diſtempers and breaches are perpetuated, and Religion in general ſuffers much damage and ſcorn. But it would be the glory of that party that ſtands on the Vantage-ground, to give a leading Example of unconſtrained Moderation.

SECT. XVII.

Acquieſcence in the Widened Eſtabliſhment, is the Safety of Religion.

IF it be ſaid, That a little yeelding doth but make way for further Incroachments; we ſuppoſe that Governors know how far to truſt, and what it is fit to grant, if ſubjects know not what is fit for them to ask. Perſons allowed in the Publick Service, may eaſily be kept in that

that dependance on the State, which ſhall prevent the danger of an *Anti-Clergy*. We ſuppoſe likewiſe, that a ſound Church-Government is not ſo weak and tottering, that the Abatement of ſome Rigors in things at beſt but indifferent, will hazard its overturning.

The wiſer ſort of Diſſenters, whoſe Conformity, were they gained, would moſt avail, are weary of theſe ſtrifes, and conſider what is paſſable in the ſtate of *England*, and might ſettle this Church. They dread the Conſequents of Changes, the hurrying into other Extreams, and the wild excurſions of ſome ſpirits. They would not be left again to the late uncertainty, and continual Vacillations in Government; and they have long ſince ſeen the manifold Errors committed in the Policy of the late times. They know that ſuch unfixed Liberty would not ſecure them. And therefore it may well be thought, they would accept reaſonable terms, and reſt ſatisfied therein.

But this Conſideration is taken by the wrong Handle, if this ſober and ſteddy part of the *Non-conformiſts* be ſlighted and judged the leſs conſiderable, becauſe they are caſt into one condition as to the Law, with others that are of more unmanageable and unſtable Principles. For who can tell how time may work out things, and frame the Spirits of the unſober to a greater ſoberneſs, and diſpoſe them to a better conſiſtency among themſelves? But howſoever, can it make for the Publick Weal, That the more diſcreet and moderate ſort, that might eaſily be brought in, ſhould be inforced to continue the chief reputation and ſtrength of a divided Party?

SECT.

SECT. XVIII.

Of Toleration *and* Connivence.

LET Impartial Reaſon judg, Whether a ſwaying, or at leaſt a momentous part of thoſe that cloſe not with the preſent ſtate Eccleſiaſtical, may not be incompaſſed in an Eſtabliſhment of ſuch a latitude, as may happily ſettle this Church, and conſequently promote the Peace, Wealth and Honour of the Civil State.

As for others that are of ſound Belief, and good Life, yet have taken in ſome Principles of Church-Government leſs congruous to National Settlement, I would never be a means of expoſing them to Oppreſſion, Contempt and Hatred, but would admit their Plea, as far as it will go. For if God hath received them, why ſhould their fellow-ſervants reject or afflict them cauſleſly? Every true Chriſtian ſhould be tender of all that love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity.

Nevertheleſs, their Liberty pleaded for, is not to be inordinate, but meaſured and limited by the ſafety of true Religion in general, and of the publick Eſtabliſhed Order; which is not unpracticable: For the world wants not an Experiment of the ſafety of a Toleration or Indulgence ſo regulated.

SECT. XIX.

Diſſenters of Narrow and Rigid Principles, adviſed to Moderation.

AS Authority may be too prone to err in the Severity of Impoſing; ſo Subjects may be too wilful in refuſing to obey. As an explicit Aſſent, and Approbation, may by Superiors be too rigidly exacted in doubtful things;

things; ſo the unreaſonable ſtiffneſs and harſhneſs of Inferiors, may keep them from that compliance in practice, which their Conſcience (becalm'd from Paſſion and Prejudice) would not gainſay. A ſervile, fawning, temporizing Spirit, is vile enough; but that which is ſedate, caſtigate, and ſubdued to Reaſon, is not only pleaſing to Governours, but alſo of great avail for Publick Peace.

Every Chriſtian ſhould be deeply ſenſible of the common Intereſt of Reformed Chriſtianity, which is incomparably more valuable then thoſe private Opinions, and little narrow Models, which may have much of his fancy and affection. Well-minded perſons may eaſily be deceived touching their private Sentiments in Religion. They may think they are under the uncontrolable Sway of Conſcience, when indeed they are but bound up by Cuſtom, Education, Complexion, or ſome other kind of Prejudice. For ones own ſake, one would gladly be rid of ſuch Confinements, and walk more at liberty: But much more ſhould one ſtrive to be as comprehenſive as may be, for the common ſafety, and advancement of true Religion, which cannot ſtand by ſuch uncertainty and multiplicity of petty forms, but requires an ample and well-ſetled ſtate, to defend and propagate it againſt the amplitude and potency of the *Romiſh* Intereſt. The prudent and ſober ſhould not eaſily ſettle upon ſuch Opinions in Church-Order, as will never ſettle the Nation, but tend rather to infinite perplexity and diſcompoſure.

Howſoever, I will not bear too hard upon any thing that may fairly pretend to Conſcience, which, though erroneous, ſhould not be harſhly dealt with. Nevertheleſs, if (when all is ſaid) ſome diſſatisfaction doth invincibly poſſeſs the Judgment, in that caſe Chriſtian Humility and Charity, as well as Diſcretion, adviſeth ſuch perſons to acquieſce in their private Security and Freedom, and not

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to reach after that Liberty that may unsettle the Publick Order, and undermine the Common Safety.

SECT. XX.

This Comprehensive State of Religion further considered, with respect to Three important Interests: First to that of the KING.

FOR the removing of all conceived Prejudices, let this desired Latitude of Religion be considered with respect to the several Interests of the King, of the Church and Clergy, and of the Nobility and Gentry. First let it be examined in reference to the Interest of Regal Majesty.

The *Non-conformists*, and others inclinable to their way, are by some charged with such Principles as detract much from Kingly Power and Dignity, and tend to advance Popular Faction. It is confessed, they have been eager Assertors of Legal Liberties; yet herein they were not singular, but in almost all PARLIAMENTS have had the concurrence of many good Patriots that were not touch'd with the least tincture of *Puritanism*. They profess much affection to MONARCHY, and the Royal Family; and think they have made it appear by their hazardous declaring against the designed Death of our late Soveraign, and their vigorous Actings for the Restitution of His Majesty that now is. They are so well satisfied, as none more, in the Ancient Fundamental Constitution of this Kingdom.

This Arraignment of their supposed Principles about Government, may haply proceed upon Mistake. There is reason enough to think, That the many late Disputes about Prerogative and Liberty, are *Controversiæ ortæ non primæ*, that they had their rise from something else, which lyes at the bottom. Both former and present times

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do ſhew, That the *Anti-Puritan* Intereſt, when occaſion ſerves, and the urgency of Affairs requires, can conteſt with Princes, and pretend Conſcience too, in croſſing their Deſigns. Inclinations and Intereſts, more then Speculative Opinions, will be found to have born the ſway, and cauſed thoſe active motions on the one hand, and the other. Theſe *Dogmata* or Problemes about Obedience and Government, do but little, where mens Affections and Concernments do not give them ſpirit and vigor. The practical Judgment of Inferiors, hath a bias in this caſe, according to their Superiors Benignity or Aſperity towards them. High ſtrains of ſpeech may eaſily proceed from ſuch as flatter their Governors, or know not themſelves; but they are worthy of credit, that ſpeak credible things.

The wiſe man ſaith, *He that repeateth a matter, ſeparateth very friends.* A looking back to former diſcords, marrs the moſt hopeful Redintegration. Acts of Indempnity, are Acts of Oblivion alſo, and muſt be ſo obſerved. Let not the way of Peace be barr'd by the framing of ſuch Teſts as may perplex the minds of men, but add no real ſecurity to the Higher Powers. For as ſome ſet their wits a work in framing, ſo do others in evading the deſigns of ſuch Engagements. And of thoſe that deviſe how to evade them, ſome may deal ſeriouſly, and others perhaps may trifle with Conſcience; but the internal Judgments of both remain what they were before. The common Evaſions or Violations of ſuch bonds among all parties in our times, do ſhew, That they are not the way to root out inveterate Opinions. But there is a ſurer way to obviate the evil tendency of ſuch Opinions, and to render them ineffectual. For it is not this or that narrow conception or notion, but ſome greater thing, that rules the actions of humane life. The condition of the diſſatisfied, may without damage, or juſt ſcandal to any, be made ſuch, That their far greater

number ſhall not long for changes, but gladly embrace preſent things; and then the implacably evil-minded would want matter to work upon, and reſt without hope of diſturbing the Publick Peace.

Moreover, all Loyal Principles are not incloſed in ſome Poſitions, in which may be much variety and uncertainty of opinion, and in which both Theological and Political Caſuiſts (and they great Aſſertors of Monarchical Government) have written doubtfully. Men of different apprehenſions in ſuch things, may be indued with the ſame prudence, ſoberneſs, common charity, love of Publick Tranquility, reverence of Regal Majeſty, conſcience of Allegiance, and an awful regard of Divine and Humane Laws. Men of nicer Judgments, may have as loyal hearts as thoſe of greater latitude. And why ſhould the judgments of ſuch men be rack'd, and their ſpirits vexed with curious ſcrutinies? The ancient Sacred Bonds of Fidelity, are not queſtioned; and if they do not, what others can oblige and awe the Conſcience?

The extent of Prerogatives Royal, of the Priviledges of PARLIAMENTS, and of the Peoples Immunities, is not matter fit for common diſquiſition, but requires to be kept among the Secrets of Government. It might have been far better, if theſe points had been more gently and warily handled on all ſides. The *Engliſh* (in general) are an ingenuous and open-hearted people; and if unlucky accidents diſcompoſe them not, they are of themſelves diſpoſed to have their Kings in great veneration; and doubtleſs their ſatisfaction and good eſtate, is their Soveraigns true repoſe.

SECT.

SECT. XXI.

Secondly, *To the Intereſt of the Church and Clergy.*

IN the next place, let this Comprehenſive ſtate be examined, with reſpect to the Intereſt of the *Church of England*. The Doctrine of Faith and Sacraments by Law eſtabliſhed, is heartily received by the *Non-conformiſts*, and it is like to be the Baſis of their ſtanding in *England*, as long as Proteſtant Religion ſtands. How far they approve *Epiſcopacy* and *Liturgy*, hath been above declared. Their diſſent is in ſome parts of Divine Worſhip (as they ſay) not appointed of God, but deviſed by men; alſo in the frame of the *Engliſh Hierarchy*, as it differs from the Ancient Epiſcopacy; and they avow they are under no obligation to extirpate or impeach that ancient Form. The Miniſters of this Perſwaſion are Godly and Learned, able and apt to teach the people; and no ſmall part of the Congregations in *England* feel the loſs of them. Doth the Lord of the Harveſt command that ſuch Labourers be thruſt out of his Service? And will the chief Shepherd at his appearing juſtifie this uſage of his faithful Servants?

The Biſhops and dignified Clergy, and thoſe of their Perſwaſion, have the advantage of Law and Power. But can they believe that the Church of God in theſe Nations, is terminated in them alone? It is hoped that Chriſt hath a larger Intereſt in theſe Realms. Shall it be ſaid of the *Engliſh Prelacy*, That it cannot ſtand without the ejection of Thouſands of Orthodox, Pious Miniſters? Or that it dreads a general diffuſion of knowledg in the people? Or that this is a Maxime thereof, *No Ceremony, no Biſhop*; as if the Biſhop's work were at an end, and his office of no force, if Ceremonies were left indifferent? Is an Eccleſiaſtical Government, that pleads Apoſtolical Inſtituti-

on, and Univerſal reception, ſo weak and feeble, that godly and peaceable men, preaching only the indubitable truths of Chriſtianity, would undermine it? If any ſhould preach what is Schiſmatical and Seditious, they are liable to Reſtraints and Cenſures, according to their demerits. Why will the eſtabliſhed Clergy refuſe their Brethren, and ſet them at ſuch a diſtance? Is it their honour, ſtrength, or ſafety, that ſuch men ſhould be numbred among their oppoſites?

The intrinſick and permanent State of *Prelacy*, is not advanced by theſe preſent Rigors. It is not more rooted in the hearts of people, nor are many gained over that would ſtick cloſe to it in a time of tryal. The dread, that is of its Cenſures, ariſeth from the ſubſequent temporal Penalties. And however it be, its Chariot drives but heavily. It cannot meaſure its ſtrength by the number of *Conformiſts*, among whom there are many that are a reproach unto it, and many that are very indifferent men; and there are the *Latitudinarians*, that are accounted but luke-warm *Conformiſts*; and many that ſubmit, may not like the impoſing; and men may think divers Injunctions (that are not ſimply unlawful) to be burdenſome and inconvenient, and would be glad to ſhake off the yoke. A great Prelate before the late Warrs, is reported to ſay, *That the Conforming Puritan was the Devil of the Times.* And of thoſe that zealouſly affect the eſtabliſhed Order, there are not a few that diſguſt the behaviour of Church-men, and are ready to upbraid them with the known moderation of many whom they have ejected; yea, the more conſiderate Sons of the Church, do obſerve and bewail ſuch dangerous miſcarriages by *Simony*, *Pluralities*, *Non-reſidency*, and *Profaneneſs*, as threaten a ſecond downfall. The world takes notice what men are caſt out; and what is the condition of multitudes that are retained in the Service of the Church.

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There are a ſort of men of great Worth and Reputation in the ſeveral Orders of this Kingdom, that indeed affect Epiſcopacy, but ſee the inconvenience and danger of this Severity, and would have things carried with Diſcretion and Equity, and are ready to do good offices for the depreſſed Party. If the Affairs of the Commonwealth ſhould go backwards, can the Clergy alone be at reſt in their Honour, Power and Wealth? Though of later times it hath been ſaid, *No Biſhop, no King*; yet it is not evident, That the preſent frame of Prelacy hath an immutable Intereſt in the Regal Name and Power.

The Religion of any State will ſink, if it be not held up in its venerable Eſtimation among the people; and it cannot be long held in reverence, if it hath neither the reality, nor appearance of Devotion and Sanctity. That which is diveſted of the Diſguiſes and Impoſtures of *Romiſh* Superſtition, had need to be ſpirited with Life and Power. Minds touch'd with Devotion, will look either to the way of true and real Godlineſs, or to the Popiſh Bodily Exerciſe. It is here ſincerely wiſh't, That the Clergy may hold their ſtate in ſafety and honour; That they may never be laid low for want of meet Revenue or Dignity; That they may always preſerve a reverend eſteem of their Perſons and Office. But then the Biſhops muſt not be the Head of ſuch Miniſters, as for ignorance and lewdneſs are a ſcandal and ſcorn to their Neighbours; nor of ſuch as incourage profaneneſs, and deprave ſeriouſneſs and diligence in Religion and ſtrictneſs of life, under the ſcandal of *Puritaniſm*, *Fanaticiſm*, or ſuch like names of reproach. They muſt ſo manage their Government, that under it the ſound knowledg of God may encreaſe through the Land; that holineſs and righteouſneſs may flouriſh; that their influence may diſpoſe men to do thoſe things that are honeſt, and pure, and comely, and vertuous, and praiſe-worthy. To this may be added the ſetling

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of the Church in a due extent, that it may incompaſs ſo much as may enable it to vanquiſh whatſoever is inconſiſtent with it; and to keep within compaſs whatſoever may be tollerated under it.

The great danger and damage which may be dreaded to enſue this moderation, (which nevertheleſs may poſſibly not enſue it) is but the cutting off ſome Luxuriances from ſome in the Higheſt Order; or the ſharing among many what was ingroſſed by a few. And the Church doth not change for the worſe, if ſome diminution of greatneſs in a very few perſons makes way for a more general amplitude, ſtability and peace; and the Clergy enjoy an Eſtate of Power, Plenty and Honour, with leſs envy and hazard of undermining.

SECT. XXII.

Thirdly, *To the Intereſt of the Nobility and Gentry.*

THere is another Intereſt, that of the *Nobility* and *Gentry*, which is worthy of regard in this Inquiry. The Latitude and Liberty here diſcourſed, is thought to give too great advantage to the *Citizens* and the *Commonalty*; as alſo to make all ſorts more knowing, and leſs ſervile; and conſequently, leſs obſequious to the wills of great men. And the doubt is, whether the Nobles and Gentlemen of *England* can maintain their Authority and Splendor, with the Freedom of Citizens and the common people. Surely in the times of their Anceſtors they were in as much ſplendor and power, as they have been in the memory of this Age; and yet in thoſe times both Citizens and Yeomanry were rich and free, brave and worthy in their own rank. And it may be the higher Degrees in *England* would never be ſo advanced, as ſome have conceited, if the meaner ſort were reduced to the condition of the *French* Peaſantry. For there is another Spirit in the *Engliſh* People, which peradventure may

may not be vanquiſhed at leſs charges then diſſipation of the ſtrength and riches, and all the glory of this Land. Beſides, Trade which is the Life of *England*, muſt be managed by a people not of a ſlaviſh and ſordid condition. And in a Trading Nation, things do ſo paſs to and fro, and run from one hand to another, that New Men by their Wealth will be always getting up into the rank of Gentlemen, and former Gentile Families will be decaying. There is a Liberty for every Native to purchaſe Lands; and though ſome of our Tenures began in the Vaſſalage of meaner men to great ones, yet they are now by cuſtom of later Ages, become ſo far free, that they are fit for any ingenuous perſons to take them up. Moreover, the *Engliſh* Gentry are Commons, according to the main frame of this Polity; and that great Convention where they meet in their chiefeſt Power, is the *Commons Houſe of Parliament*, in which they repreſent the univerſality of the Commons of all Counties, and Cities, and Burroughs: And therefore the free Eſtate of the Commons, is the true Intereſt of Gentlemen. And how groundleſs and fruitleſs is all evil emulation between the Gentry and Citizens, or Traders! For they mutually uphold each other, or both muſt fall to the ground. Many Gentile Families are the Off-ſpring of former Citizens; and many Citizens are the ſons of Gentlemen. And when the Eſtates of ancient Gentry are ſinking, their Marriage with Citizens is an ordinary means of underpropping them. And if Traders fail, the Revenue of the Gentry muſt fail alſo; whoſe Lands did never bear that Price, nor yeeld that Annual Rent that of late they have done, till the Nation became great in Foreign Trade. If emulation of Gallantry be any matter of grudg between them, the Citizens may leave the Gentry to their own Garbs, and retain a grave habit to themſelves, in which they may ſufficiently expreſs their Wealth, as their Predeceſſors did before them. For it is

generous

generous so to do. And as for the Nobility and Gentry, their Honour lyes in upholding their Families, and bearing sway in their Countries; and they do the one by discreet and liberal Frugality; and the other by having and using greater Abilities then the vulgar, for their Countries Service.

SECT. XXIII.

The general Security that comes by this Latitude.

THE chief Prejudices have been considered; and these three Important Interests being known aright, are found not to oppose, but to require this Latitude of Religion. Furthermore, our common Security and Freedom, earnestly perswades it: For the Severities of Law against Dissenters, may at length come home to them or theirs, who take themselves to be far out of the reach thereof. And the inforcing of those Penalties may need such ways and means, as may trouble them who are tender of the Lawful Rights and Liberties of *English*-men. But the Common Peace being once firmly setled in this Comprehensive state, all Necessity of Powers and Proceedings extraordinary, will disappear, and vanish away.

Finally, The more Pacifick we are at home, the more Powerful and Formidable shall we be abroad. But our Breaches are too well known, and make little for our Reputation or Advantage in Foreign parts. What can it avail, to disturb a People that would settle in peace, and whose Peace is accommodated to the Publick Weal, and bound up together with it? It must needs be fruitless and unfortunate, and cause perplexities and miscarriages in the chiefest Affairs of State. It is a saying of the wisest of Kings, *He that troubles his own House, shall inherit the wind.*

FINIS.